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#24

Abbotsford wants a say in same-sex issue

But would-be protesters not told about public meetings

James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.– The battle over the rights of same-sex couples appears to be on hold in Ontario. But in B.C. it's just begun.

And according to the religious community, the NDP government is pushing the issue without listening to their concerns.

"When it comes to people raising religious concerns, the NDP sees them as wanting to force it down other people's throats, which has never been the case," says Harry De Jong, a Social Credit member of the legislature representing Abbotsford, and a member of the First CRC. "But when you're a Christian, you want to live like a Christian, and that should be anybody's privilege."

The provincial government has launched a public review of the province's Human Rights Act, and a key feature was to be "consultation with all parts of the public."

But concerned Christians are not finding it easy to have their voices heard. While community and special interest groups were notified of the recent public meeting in Abbotsford, church groups were not. Neither was it advertised in the local media.

Pastor Doug Knoll, vice-chairperson of the Abbotsford-Matsqui ministerial association, criticized the review in a local-newspaper for trying to keep the Abbotsford public meeting a secret in this Bible belt community.

"Leaders of human rights groups and other human rights activists knew the time and place," Knoll says. "Is it a case where it is better if the public doesn't attend, so the faithful few can make the changes they want without any interference from the ordinary citizen who might have a leaning to the right?"

Bill Black, the University of British Columbia law professor appointed by the NDP to conduct the review, admits he made a mistake in not publicizing the meetings.

"We felt if we just put advertisements in the paper we would not get a cross-section of the population," he says.

Black also participated in a task force on human rights in Ontario, where a bill that would have given spousal benefits to homosexual couples was recently defeated. While he claims the B.C. government did not instruct him to look into any specific policy areas, critics say Black is the front man for an upcoming NDP policy venture into the area of same-sex spousal benefits.

Ron Gray, a Christian political activist involved in the Christian Heritage party and the provincial Family Coalition party, says the NDP has a hidden agenda in reviewing the B.C. Human Rights Act.

"The homosexual community is trying to gain approval for a lifestyle that has always been considered reprehensible in every society," he says. "And this government is actively supporting the gay community in its attempts to reshape our society."

Gray also expressed concern that gay and lesbian teachers in

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COURTESY HARRY DEJONG

Harry De Jong

Dutch economist offers recipe for world money problems

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — Even in a strong economy, more and more people are unemployed, the gap between rich and poor is widening and waste is piling up as the environment cannot sustain our habits. Poor countries are getting poorer and their debt is increasing even as they try to reduce it. We feel we are being sucked into a bottomless pit.

That's the picture Dutch Christian economist Bob Goudzwaard painted during a recent visit to Toronto.

It takes a prophet to show the roots of the problem and to prescribe a cure. Some people see Goudzwaard as such a prophet. He is convinced that all these problems are interconnected, and only by changing their common cause will we have a chance to keep national and world economies from collapse.

Replace economics of happiness

The problem, says Goudzwaard, is that the economy runs our society, and economics now deals only with dollars. We need to go back to the original meaning of "economics," he insists, which is "administrative care of resources." He calls for an "economics of care" to replace the "economics of happiness."

Something is deeply wrong in a system which has resulted in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund becoming "receiving" institutions, Goudzwaard says. "They now receive each year more money from poor nations than they give them," says Goudzwaard.

Their original purpose of "giving" to poor nations has now been turned on its head. As they try to restructure Third World economies their effect is to cut back on health care, education, food supplies and government services, which are already at desperately inadequate levels.

"A nation living beyond its means, as Canada and the United States are doing, makes that nation overly dependent on others," says Goudzwaard. He cites the Gulf War, a major cause of which was the American need to protect its oil imports.

Stronger economy not the answer

It is not true that a growing, stronger economy will help solve the problems, Goudzwaard insists. Just the reverse — growth itself is the problem. For example, growth based on increasing productivity increases the national

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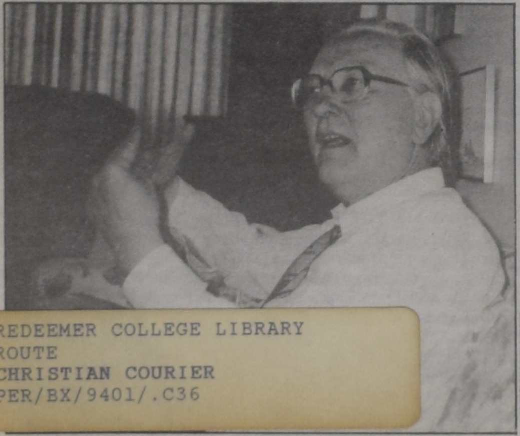

ROBERT VANDERVENNEN

Bob Goudzwaard

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Biases differ in same-sex politics: Mennonite pastor

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the province are insisting on the right to teach that the homosexual lifestyle is normal and acceptable.

"Our children are being indoctrinated in politically correct but morally neutral values,"he says.

While some examples of reverse discrimination were raised, the same-sex family issue dominated the Abbotsford public meeting.

"We all have biases, but the biases of the provincial government are different from those of this community," says Nicholas Dyck, executive director of the Mennonite Brethren churches in the province.

Meanwhile, De Jong may not have much company in the legislature in opposing spousal benefits to gay couples.

Liberal opposition leader Gordon Campbell recently announced if elected, his party would consider granting gay couples spousal benefits and adoption rights.

"The family structure is not the first and foremost concern of this government," De Jong says. "I believe they'd love to put (spousal benefits) through, but the NDP is treading a little carefully on this issue because they know many people oppose their ideas".

A recent Angus Reid poll shows almost 60 per cent of Canadians oppose legislation giving spousal benefits and adoption rights to gays.

Cultural renewal an absolute must

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debt because most government services, like education and health care, are labor intensive. They will cost more money and thereby increase the debt, because the "productivity" of these services can't increase much.

A cultural renewal is required today, says Goudzwaard, "which has the depth and breadth of a conversion." The changes we need must be not only economic but especially cultural and religious, he insists. We need to give up the vision of "progress" (with its evolutionistic overtones) and adopt a way of thinking that will give us an economy that is not internally out of date.

12-step recovery

Goudzwaard offers a "12 step" proposal to renew the Canadian and global economies. The proposal builds "human relationships in Canada and around the world which possess less injustice, violence and oppression than they do now." The steps are interconnected, like a fruit tree whose cells must co-operate for the tree to bear good fruit.

At the root of these changes is a concept Goudzwaard calls "pre-care." For example, labor unions in Sweden and the Netherlands have led the way by suggesting a wage freeze for their members for five years if that would lead to more jobs. Industry, too, should "open itself up to notions of responsibility which are broader than that of producing products as efficiently as possible."

Enough is enough

Changes to the Canada Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance are suggested parts of restructuring, as are ideas on care for the environment. Measurements of "economic growth" should include factors for "human development." International trade agreements should be reassessed and lifestyles should be changed. In short, we need a new cultural ethic of "enough is enough," says Goudzwaard.

What can bring us to the kind of "conversion" that Goudzwaard sees as necessary?

"Getting people to understand the real and deep problem." But he warns that time is running out.

Goudzwaard and a Dutch colleague, professor Harry de Lange, have set down these ideas in a book published in the Netherlands and in Germany. Now an English translation has been prepared by Mark Vander Vennen and Citizens for Public Justice. Its Canadian edition, *Beyond Poverty and Affluence: Toward a Canadian Economy of Care*, is due to be published by University of Toronto Press in February, 1995.

Goudzwaard digs down to faith roots

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — Dr. Bob Goudzwaard's interest and ability to look for the root causes of cultural phenomena is not a new and different course in his life.

He grew up in the Netherlands and was strongly influenced by the neo-Calvinism of Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd. He was deeply attracted to the approach of professor J.P.A. Mekkes in Amsterdam, who saw modern thought holistically. From Mekkes Goudzwaard learned to see the religious ideas underneath concrete issues.

Goudzwaard did his doctoral studies in the foundations of economics. Later, as a member of the Dutch Parliament, he gained experience in relating practical issues to underlying reality.

Goudzwaard feels blessed to be able to work with professor Harry de Lange, who has a much different background. De Lange was not born into a Christian family. He was a committed socialist and became an assistant of Nobel Prize-winning economist Jan Tinbergen. After his conversion, de Lange became a founder of the ecumenical movement in the Netherlands. Goudzwaard and de Lange share the same spirituality, and Goudzwaard finds stimulus in vibrant Dutch ecumenism.

For 10 years Goudzwaard chaired the Interchurch Development Council, which during those years distributed the equivalent of $100 million Canadian dollars. Now he co-chairs the European Ecumenical Commission for Development, supported by 25 European denominations. It lobbies the European Parliament in Brussels on behalf of the poorer nations. He is also professor of economic philosophy at the Free University in Amsterdam.

"National indebtedness has a spiritual aspect that's not often recognized," says Goudzwaard. He connects it to the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." He says, "We shouldn't want to give more costs than benefits to future generations."

Bom leaves CC pitstop, Bakker moves in

BERT WITVOET

SHOW ME THE ROPES: Irene Bom (r.) takes her successor, Sylvia Bakker, through a proofreading session. Irene, who loved her work as journalist, is leaving CC. She found it hard to refuse a grant from Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. towards a Ph D in English literature. Sylvia Bakker was hired to take her place as staff reporter and proofreader. Sylvia just finished a journalism course at Algonquin College in Ottawa Ont. She hails from Russell, near Ottawa. Godbew'you, Irene! Well come, Sylvia!

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Toronto classis opts for ounce of abuse prevention

First names for pastors are out: seminary prof

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — Classis Toronto of the Christian Reformed Church appointed a committee at its May meeting to take the church's fight against abuse a step further. The committee will develop specific guidelines for all church workers in order to prevent abuse.

The move follows the deposition in one year of two ministers in Classis Toronto, James Tuininga and Derk Pierik, both for abuse of office involving sexual indiscretions.

Several CRC classes and synods have in the past few years addressed the matter of abuse of office. This year's synod will discuss guidelines for what to do when a paid church staff member has been found guilty of abuse.

What Classis Toronto hopes to accomplish with its new committee takes the process a step further. It will not only set policy for all church workers, paid and unpaid, it will also focus on how to prevent abuse.

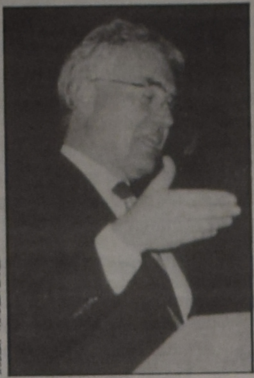
"It's sort of the next wave," says committee convener Mary VanderVennen, a psychological therapist from Toronto. "We will be using some material developed by other churches," she says.

Lack of training

Dirk Evans, a CRC teaching hospital chaplain who was part of Toronto Classis' committee dealing with the second deposition, says that these situations are tragic.

"We older pastors did not get any quality education on how to maintain professional boundaries," he says. "We were not told, as seminary students are today, that in a 40-year career span, one out of seven pastors will cross a boundary of some sort."

Nor were they informed about "transference," a process of giving full trust to caregivers by those being cared for.



ROBERT VANDERVENNEN

Dr. Melvin Hugen

That situation has changed drastically, says Calvin Seminary professor Mel Hugen in Grand Rapids, Mich. Hugen teaches a required course in pastoral care and addresses issues like kinds of abuse, detection, moral and legal responsibilities, how and when to refer parishioners to therapists.

Hugen does not want pastors to rely too heavily on awareness training through reading and attending lectures. "We easily deceive ourselves," he says. Instead he wants more emphasis placed on setting up structural safeguards. He wants pastors to pay attention to when and where they meet the people they counsel.

Dress is important, as is length of time and number of sessions. Hugen recommends no more than five sessions, after which a pastor refers the person to a professional therapist. He does not recommend first-names between pastor and parishioner, "because then it's just Bill and Mary sitting down. That blurs boundaries," says Hugen.

Evans thinks that spiritual leaders are set up for all kinds of trouble through what he calls, "this nonsense of being available for all people at all times." He is a firm believer in setting limits on visit times and depth of involvement, as he teaches student chaplains in Toronto Hospital.

Evans thinks the Christian Reformed system of mentoring junior pastors, developed by director of pastor-church relations services Louis Tamminga, should prove helpful in avoiding serious problems down the line. The system requires each classis to appoint a regional pastor and each regional pastor to ask an experienced pastor to act as a mentor for a beginning pastor.

Such a mentor offers prayer support and meets with the junior pastor on a monthly basis to discuss problems as they are encountered.

Need for retraining

Hugen is generally satisfied with the kind of training seminary students receive in his and other courses in Calvin Seminary. But he's concerned that accountability continue after graduation. He likes the mentoring system, but not every pastor does an equally good job, he says.

A second problem he sees is the still large number of senior pastors who never got any of this training when they went to seminary. He would like to see a system in place where pastors who are into a lot of counselling, like chaplains, get trained and certified and then endorsed by the chaplaincy committee. Previous synods have so far resisted this kind of endorsement.

He agreed it would not be a bad idea if seminaries practiced what car manufacturers do from time to time: issue a recall of earlier models.

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Editorial

If you either have it or need it, you're hip

I vividly remember how at a Toronto trade show one of our sons walked past display tables with stereo equipment, cameras and sports equipment. Trailing his hand over the various items he said matter of factly, "Have it, have it, need it, have it, need it, need it, have it...." He was joking, of course, knowing full well he was pricking the remains of his parents' anti-consumerism mentality fostered by years of sermons about stewardship and re-enforced by the lean years of World War II and immigration. Both my wife and I broke out laughing.

But while we were laughing, I recognized that our son was really acting out a tragic development in Western civilization. This business of "have it, need it" accurately portrays how people spend their time and resources. It also catches in an uncanny way the spirit of modern advertising and marketing. I was told recently by professor Quentin Schultz of Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., that magazines that sell are the ones that tell people how to spend time and money! (No wonder CC is experiencing difficulties. This editorial just blew all our chances of growth.)

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The going philosophy today is that if you don't have it, you need it. And if you need it, who can argue? It's all so factual. There's no need to introduce any values into the discussion.

To be honest, my own early training in scarcity has been somewhat adulterated by a later exposure to "the good times" and its consumer pressures. Our house now features a number of items that came in "over my dead body." After a while you stop fighting. A dishwasher, a VCR and a CD player do give a lot of enjoyment, don't they?

'Need' needs no justification

I have been rethinking this whole business of having and needing. My wife shoved a book under my nose the other day entitled: *Need: the New Religion.* The author, Tony Walter, analyses how the new morality of need has gripped our societies. He traces the trend to philosophers like Wilhelm Reich, Herbert Marcuse and Ivan Illich, who have equated human progress with the expansion and fulfilment of needs.

According to Walter, our societies have developed "a language of need." Whereas before we would speak of the duties of parents, we now talk about the needs of children. Walter traces this switch to the unwillingness of our society to subject itself to a higher morality.

When one speaks of duties, the terminology of "ought to" and "should" come into play, which presupposes a higher law, in fact, a higher being. But to speak of "needs" does not require any discussion of a higher authority. A need, which is quickly metamorphosed into "a right" when it comes to social policy, is self-evident and falls outside the scope of values and moral deliberations.

> ***"People can be professing Christians and practising atheists at the same time."***

All of this gets to be a little philosophical. What does this have to do with consumerism? Well, philosophies and worldviews shape society. We are what we are today because a few hundred years ago a few philosophers in their ivory towers began to dismantle the Christian worldview.

Once a worldview gets into the culture, it becomes second nature to people. No one argues the matter anymore. It has become a matter of lifestyle.

Things take time and space

At the same time, the way a society implements a worldview often re-enforces it, too. It's true that consumerism came out of a view that God does not exist or does not matter. But it's equally true that the practice of consumerism drives God out of our lives.

The more we surround ourselves with things and happenings, the less space there is for God. This is why it's possible that people can be professing Christians and practising atheists at the same time. They claim to have a spiritual interest, but at heart they are materialists. Successful, hardworking Calvinists are especially vulnerable when they do not maintain a rigorous spiritual discipline.

Why, for example, are people so busy these days? Why don't they have time for devotions, for building relationships or for admiring a lupine stalk? It's because they have so many things to look after and so many events to attend to. Our lives have become either "thingified" or "eventified."

If we want to get out of this mentality, we need to simplify our lives. We need to get back to a basic understanding of what Jesus meant when he taught us to pray for our daily bread. Our daily bread is what in God's eyes we really need. The rest is either extra, which we may receive or share thankfully, or surplus, which we must reject forcefully.

What this requires on our part is an adjustment of our shopping brakes. Impulse buying and impulse entertainment should be out. We should ooh and ah less when someone shows us his or her latest purchases. Why are we so quickly impressed?

We could challenge ourselves more with questions like: Do I really need it? Is this purchase going to enrich my spiritual life? Is this going to help me in my relationship with my neighbor? Is this product harmful to the environment?

Perhaps someday my son will stroll past a table with the latests gadgets and say, "Don't have it, don't need it, stuff it."

BW

Correct, 'inclusive' and 'incisive' churches will be effective

Perhaps the answer will never be totally in as to whether or not the Willow Creek "seeker sensitive" worship style is in fact "the way to go" for Canadian churches ('Seeker Services' by Irene Bom, April 15, 1994). John Van Til notes that "so far these new churches are attracting lower numbers of people than in the United States."

If it is true that many Christian Reformed people who want an "outreach church... really want an ethnic CRC with alternative worship services," I suspect that therein lies the reason for the greater success of seeker sensitive churches in the U.S. There are a number of regions in the U.S., particularly in Michigan, where the concentration of Dutch settlers of the Reformed (CRC) faith is very strong. Therefore, no matter how "liturgically set" or "outreach oriented" a congregation in places like Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo or Holland may be, it will be "ethnic" at the same time.

True, the people of Canada have always tended to be more reserved than American folks. The latter are more willing to risk an unhampered expression of their faith and beliefs, though sometimes at the risk of not being theologically reliable and biblically sound.

Personally I have over the years participated in all manner of worship, each of which I appreciated for its merits: Catholic, Anglican, Pentecostal and charismatic. When I came to Winnipeg I really did not expect to find a fellowship as similar to and seeker-oriented as the one I came from in my home town.

Today, after five years at Good News Fellowship in Winnipeg, I praise the Lord for this wonderful church community where "we do not look at where you are coming from, but where most assuredly you can be going and growing," where we are ministering to a growing number of youth, where we know the excitement of participating in planting new churches, where folks moving to other parts of our country are looking for the same church spirit.

When our expression of faith is not only correct theologically but also inclusive and incisive, when we do not emphasize one doctrine at the expense of another, then whatever manner of worship we may have will be effective.

How then do we measure the effectiveness of our worship? Surely not by numbers in the church register. Perhaps by the numbers going out to serve in other churches.

Thank you for your thought-provoking article.

Peter Paetkau
Winnipeg, Man.

Don't blame the CCC for swan song, says church rep

Irene Bom's article on Bruce McLeod's sermon (p. 20, May 27), and especially the emphasis of the heading, could have been centred better.

Let me make myself clear: it should have covered what the Canadian Council of Churches *did* say and do in the five days of its meeting, instead of what it did not say:

1. "The CCC is a community of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

The assembly affirmed this basis in its draft message of May 18.

If the Christian Reformed Church were a member of the Canadian Council of Churches, its delegates (and I also, if I were one of them) would surely push the CCC at every turn, to faithfully work out its biblical basis.

In the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) we are able to press for biblical vision and mission. I regret that we cannot do the same in the board meetings of the Canadian Council of Churches — because we are not there.

2. I agree in substance with the criticism registered by the delegates of the Reformed Church in Canada. I do not agree that the utterances of the retiring president of the CCC can form a just basis for reconsideration of the Reformed Church's membership in the CCC. To say so seems to me to imply that the CCC was responsible for the lyrics of the swan song of Dr. Bruce McLeod. The CCC neither taught him that song, nor did it learn the song from him.

3. If the CCC's board in the future expresses agreement with Dr. McLeod's notion of "whole-world ecumenism," then the Reformed Church would have serious cause to reconsider its membership in the CCC.

4. The retiring president clearly told us that the notion of "whole-world ecumenism" comes from a document released for study by the United Church. It is called "Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism."

I hope that many United Church people will respond to this study paper — and defend the uniqueness of Jesus as the only way to the Father (John 14:6). And let us use the sword of the Spirit in support of the struggling churches proclaiming this Good News in the countries now persecuting Christians. Why the persecution? Because the religion prevalent in these countries wants to leave no room for Christians and their faith in him who *is* "the way, the truth and the life."

I can neither explain nor endorse the confusing prayer to the spirits of the four winds. Perhaps native Canadian Christians can lift the fog.

Arie G. Van Eek,
executive secretary
Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada
Burlington, Ont.

Public dissent would have been appropriate at CCC meeting

Your recent article regarding the Canadian Council of Churches (May 27, 1994, p. 20) left me somewhere between mildly puzzled and seriously concerned.

I was puzzled because Rev. Van Eek states that he wishes the Christian Reformed Church would join the CCC because, at present, "we cannot publicly dissent...." Yet he proceeds to protest as "grandstanding" a member of the CCC who does precisely that. Quite frankly, as a pastor in the CRC I wish my colleagues at this meeting had been concerned enough to speak out as Gerstner did.

My concern grew as I read the closing remarks of the article regarding the "true Christian worship" which took place. In fact, I was so certain that I must have misread the article that I read it again, twice, in its entirety.

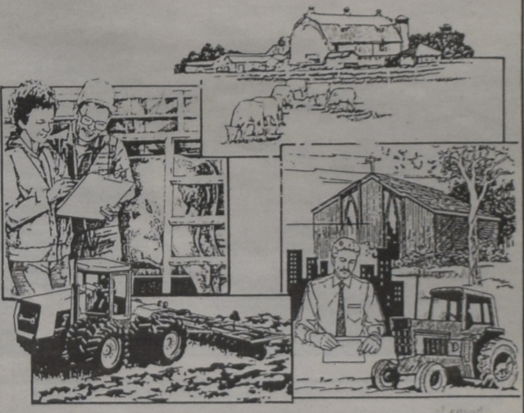
Alas, I must not be "advanced enough yet" to appreciate praying to the spirit of the west that it not desert us. I believe I will just have to rely upon the Spirit of him who promised, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the close of the age."

John Van Schepen
Bellflower, Calif.

Yes, yes, yes

Just read your editorial "Seek first the kingdom of contemporary speech" (May 27). Great writing! Reality therapy with one's faith on one's sleeve.

Elbert van Donkersgoed
Guelph, Ont.



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The joys of growing older (2)

Intergenerations

Under 30

Careers

Family

○ Seniors

This month's column continues where the last one left off. As I concluded in that column, joy is a fruit of the Spirit in need of nurturing. It thrives on a close, obedient relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:10,11).

God is a generous God! He wants joy to run through all our days. It will make the good times better and the difficult days easier to bear. This holds true for young and old, but joy has a way of intensifying as, with age, we learn more and more how to care for others. And before he died Jesus told his disciples, "...No one will take away your joy" (John 16:22b).

Therefore, with this basic joy in our hearts there are many bigger and smaller joys to be found in growing older. These joys will differ for each uniquely created individual.

For many, old age may be accompanied by a sense of accomplishment. We have raised a family, we may have built a business or worked a farm into a prosperous enterprise. We may have made a difference as a nurse, a police officer or an engineer. And to know this is a source of joy. As is holding our first or 15th grandchild.

Enrichment

As a rule, growing older means having some spare time, time which may be spent on hobbies or on developing new skills. Either choice may provide the joy of enrichment. Then there's volunteer work at home or abroad which often is a good way to discover how blessed we are ourselves — another joy!

Those who are privileged to grow older with their spouse will know the very special joy of spending much unhurried time with that spouse, of sharing thoughts perhaps never revealed before.

Unhurried time allows us to lay up added treasures in heaven, too. As Isaiah assures us, we may draw water from the wells of salvation with joy (chapter 12). And please dismiss the thought of not being needed anymore because you are "old." Older folks may, in fact, *must* keep busy interceding with God for the countless needs they know of — close to home or across this world. Then, watching for God's answers may demand a keen eye, but will cause great joy just the same.

Simple gifts

The simpler joys of old age must not be ignored! Think of Grandparents' Day at the Christian school. Think of having a bit more money to spare (I suppose that's true for most seniors) and so to be able to contribute joyfully to many a good cause.

Alice Los

Every day is a gift from God whether we are young or old. But as our years increase we realize more keenly that each dawn is another step closer to the gates of heaven where a place has been reserved for us by Jesus himself. Therefore it will be held available however long we linger here below. Knowing this and consciously anticipating our arrival is a joyous thrill in itself!

Alice Los lives in Listowel, Ont.

Where's the milk and honey?

COURTESY REDEEMER COLLEGE

MMM, MMM, GOOD! Seniors from across Ontario got an earful — and a mouthful — at the recent annual Milk and Honey retreat at Redeemer College. Under the theme "Not by Bread Alone," music professor Bert Polman tackled the topic of food in the Bible, while history professor Harry Van Dyke followed with lectures on hunger in the '30s and '40s. But all this talk made for some big appetites later on board this tall ship in Toronto.

Breast cancer pamphlets promote self-examination: seniors help themselves

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — Medical authorities throughout North America agree that breast cancer is the number one health issue for women today. One in 10 Canadian women will develop breast cancer within her lifetime, with the greatest risk from the disease coming after 50 years of age.

Officials of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation say that, although a cure for the disease has not yet been found, there have been major advances in early detection and treatment. The mastectomy (removal of the entire breast) is declining rapidly. Most breast cancers can be treated by lumpectomy — removal of the cancerous lump and some surrounding tissue, usually with the addition of radiation treatment. More women are practising self-examination of their breasts at regular monthly intervals. They have learned to report any suspicious changes immediately to their doctors, who can then take the necessary steps to determine clinically whether the patient has cancer.

Breast self-examination is easy to do, but it should be done carefully. The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation issues pamphlets featuring comic strip-style illustrations showing step-by-step breast self-examination. These pamphlets are published in Cantonese, English, French, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish. The foundation says translations into other languages will be issued when funds permit.

The pamphlets are available from: The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, 620 University Avenue, Toronto, ON M5G 2C1. Tel.: (416) 596-6773. Or on the West Coast: 1917 Hosmer Ave., Vancouver, BC V6J 2S7. Tel.: (604) 731-4723. Callers outside these areas may reach the foundation toll free at 1-800-387-9816.

The foundation plans to open six more branches across Canada and is particularly interested in recruiting volunteers from ethnocultural communities.

LOOK FOR PETER AND MARJA ON PAGE 14

Media / Arts

Film Review

Widow's Peak piques interest but lacks subtlety

Marian Van Til

Rated PG

Stars Mia Farrow, Joan Plowright, Natasha Richardson, Adrian Dunbar, Jim Broadbent Story and screenplay by Hugh Leonard Directed by John Irvin

This is one of those quirky Irish tales for which the Emerald Isle and its people are so justly famous.

This "Widow's peak" has nothing to do with hair. Rather, within a village in the Irish countryside, it's a hillside area occupied by a tightly knit community of widows, young and old.

The film's focal point is the cast of diverse characters in the village — and particularly the residents of Widow's Peak. Bit by bit we get to know first one person, then another, then another. But we begin to wonder how well we *really* know them. And we begin to ask ourselves some questions:

Should we trust the austere and wealthy *grand dame* who, by virtue of social status and affluence, is the leader of the widows (played with authoritarian verve by Joan Plowright)? Why does she seem to have some unspoken hold on these women?

Is her adult, unmarried son (Irish actor Adrian Dunbar) who still lives at home merely a wimp who does mamma's bidding or does he have a shrewd mind and plan of his own?

Why did his mother, years earlier, accept into the Widows Peak community a young, never-married woman (Mia Farrow) who 30 years later has still never married and seems to occupy a rather privileged position in the group despite her oddness? And what about the village dentist who has a crush on her? Will she spurn him? Should she? Or is there some reason he should stay away from *her*?

What about the mysterious young English widow who comes to town (Natasha Richardson)? Does she really fall in love with the *grand dame's* son? Is she using him? Is he using her?

How do the affairs of all these people fit together?

Here and there we find out, but the full answer to that last question doesn't come until the film's surprising last scene. (While we're asking questions, is there some reason why there are two films currently showing — this one and *Maverick* — that have surprise endings?)

If not witless, quirkless

There's much good acting here and sufficient intrigue to keep our interest. But director John Irvin has ultimately ironed out too many of this story's quirks and subtleties we can imagine it had. (Or am I giving more credit to story/screenwriter Hugh Leonard than his original story deserves?) The film could have been so much *more* interesting.

Much of the subtle wit so integral to Irish stories (whether folk tales or fine art) has been abandoned in favor of an almost slapstick-like humor. Did Irvin think North American audiences wouldn't "get" anything but "in your face" humor?

Even if that's true of the majority of audiences, that needn't have concerned Irvin. Why didn't he just allow the film all the color and elusiveness this story deserves, conceding that *Widow's Peak* would never draw the numbers or kinds of people who go to see *The Flintstones* or a shoot-em-up stunt piece like *Speed* (both of which are also currently playing).

Despite lacking the edge and wit it should have, *Widow's Peak* is still an enjoyable film. If you can't find it at a theatre you will undoubtedly find it a few months from now on video.

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Christian pop music needs connections to local churches and communities

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (EP) — The world of contemporary Christian music needs to become more involved with local churches and communities, says Jimmie Bowen, president of Liberty Records and co-chairman of the board for The Sparrow Corporation. "There may not be a wall, but there doesn't seem to be a bridge between the churches and us," Bowen said during the keynote address for the National Christian Radio Seminar (NCRS). "As an industry, we must fix that. Those are our 'listening clubs,' and we must make them understand that our goals are the same. If you drive people to churches, or if churches drive people to you, both of you win."

Church less believable than papers, TV in the West

WINNIPEG, Man. (EP) Newspapers and television crews are rated higher than the church in terms of believability and being a good influence in the United States, Canada, and five Western , European countries, according to a survey conducted by the Times Mirror Center. The survey found that 60 per cent of Americans find the church to be believable, while 68 per cent find newspapers believable and 73 per cent said TV news was credible. Canadians tended to rate the church much lower in credibility, at 47 per cent, in contrast to the 71 per cent who believe newspapers and 81 per cent who trust TV news.

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‘Coffee Break’ now providing workplace lunch breaks

Marian Van Til

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — For nearly 25 years women have been taking morning “Coffee Breaks” at local Christian Reformed churches or their neighbors’ homes. Thousands of mostly unchurched women across North America participate in “entry level,” evangelistic Bible study while in another room their pre-school kids may be listening to stories or playing with other kids.

But the current reality is that most mothers and women in general now work during the day. So to get them where they’re at, the CRC is about to launch an additional Coffee Break-type Bible study for employed people, says Betty Veldman, director of the CRC’s International Coffee Break program.

The new program, called “In Spirit,” will be introduced at the annual international Coffee Break convention in Wheaton, Illinois, in late July. It will be available for continent-wide use on Aug. 1.

Not just for women

The full “In Spirit” course takes six weeks of Monday to Friday, 30- to 40-minute studies that workers can do during their lunch hours. “It’s set up for one strong leader to guide the sessions. A Christian Reformed person, for example, could organize a group of fellow employees and lead the sessions,” explains Veldman. The leader gets “lots of help” from an “expansive leader’s guide,” she assures. For participants, “it requires no advance preparation. It is topical in nature, though totally Bible-centred.”

Veldman points out that “In Spirit” is not designed specifically for women (nor does it necessarily have to be used at work). It speaks to general experience rather than what has sometimes been referred to as “women’s issues.” The first study, for instance, deals with a biblical answer to modern stress; it’s called “Holding Together When It’s Falling Apart.”

Vast biblical illiteracy

Changing employment trends were not the only reason “In Spirit” was developed, says Veldman. She notes that the original Coffee Break Bible studies no longer “work” in many areas of North America. “‘Entry level’ then [25 years ago] was quite different than ‘entry level’ today. Secularized American has much less Bible and church background today,” Veldman notes.

Though basic Coffee Break Bible studies still work in places like Kansas, the B.C. islands and parts of the East Coast, she says, Veldman cites southern California as a prime example of an area where people simply don’t understand those basic Bible studies published when Coffee Break first started.

Used by 60 denominations

Coffee Break materials are now being used “by 60 different denominations from conservative to progressive. There’s a whole network of people, and it’s causing many people who went to church as children to go back to the church they were brought up in.”

Even a cult like the Mormons uses Coffee Break material, admits Veldman. That doesn’t worry her at all, and is undoubtedly a good thing, she thinks. “However God uses the material is fine,” she says. “He promises his Word will not come back to him void.”

Reformed Church focuses on Canada, sex, youth, commitment

Marian Van Til

SURREY, B.C. — Spring was an appropriate time for the Reformed Church in America (RCA) to launch a new regional synod and new plans for the denomination’s future. The new synod encompasses the whole of Canada and is called the Regional Synod of Canada.

It held its first meeting in Surrey, B.C. at the end of April, calling together just 12 delegates from the three Reformed Church classes in Canada.

Among actions the synod took was the approval of a “rigorous, biblically based sexual ethics policy,” reports the June issue of *Pioneer*, the monthly magazine of the Reformed Church in Canada. The policy “requires firm discipline of any who drift from biblical norms,” says *Pioneer*.

The regional synod also adopted a 10-year church development plan which emphasizes starting new churches and revitalizing current ministry. Future plans also include a “more effective linking” of Reformed Church youth and youth leaders. And there’s a three-year program called “Drawing Near to God,” which hopes, through regional rallies, to “call individuals and churches to repentance and renewal.”

The Canadian synod also said goodbye to the church’s executive secretary, Dr. Jonathan Gerstner, who will begin serving in September as a professor at Knox Theological Seminary in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

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Church of Scotland board asks church to say No to euthanasia

EDINBURGH, Scotland (EP) — The Church of Scotland’s board of social responsibility called on the church’s general assembly to oppose any moves to legalize euthanasia when it met May 21-27.

The board presented a report to the assembly commending and supporting the development of palliative medicine and hospice care. The report describes euthanasia as “the expression of an attitude to life which belittles the sovereignty of God, diminishes the importance of sustaining relationships and inhibits the pursuit of life-affirming answers for people in need and in distress.”

In the Netherlands, the board reported, where euthanasia is illegal but tolerated in practice, the demand for euthanasia is associated with the poor development of palliative care. In 1992, there were no palliative care of hospice services in that nation.

The report warned of the danger of the development of a euthanasia mindset, one that will not even consider alternatives when faced with terminal illness. Such a mentality, it claimed, was becoming established in the Netherlands, “where many people were beginning to see euthanasia as a right in the event of developing terminal illness.”

“The legalization of euthanasia will not produce a solution to the needs of the individual sufferer, nor will it address the health-care challenges of contemporary society,” concluded the report.

Australian law reformers call for gay adoptions

SYDNEY, Australia (EP) — The Law Reform Commission of New South Wales, Australia, has called for an overhaul of the rules governing adoption, including allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt. The report issued by the commission recommends lifting the maximum age for adoption from the current limit of 40 up to age 55. It also recommends a 30-day waiting period after the birth of the child before a birth mother can consent to adoption. The report also recommends that adoption be “open,” which would allow adoption regardless of sexual orientation or family status.

The Rev. Fred Nile, a member of the NSW Parliament, opposed the “open” adoptions, “When there are only 154 babies up for adoption in one year and there are thousands of loving, married parents waiting to adopt a baby, there is absolutely no need to include homosexuals and lesbians,” said Nile.

The ancients muttered the Scriptures

Al Wolters

CHAPTER & VERSE

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night" (Ps. 1:2 NIV).

This verse is part of the description of the righteous man. (The Hebrew word here is *ish*, which means "man" in its restricted sense; but of course it is here used in its representative function, and thus embraces women and children as well as adult males.)

The previous verse has described how that righteous man does not have his lifestyle defined by association with "the wicked," "sinners," and "mockers," and the next verse compares him to a tree planted by streams of water. But verse 2 itself speaks of the relationship of the righteous man to the *law*.

Teaching includes songs, stories

Now the word "law" in the Old Testament almost always reflects the Hebrew word *tora*, which literally means "instruction." God's law consists of his teaching of the right way to live. That instruction may contain laws and ordinances, but it also includes stories, songs and genealogies. That's why the whole Pentateuch can be referred to as the "Law."

When the psalmist says of the righteous man that he meditates on the *tora* of God day and night, he is actually echoing a phrase from Joshua 1:8, where the Lord says to Joshua: "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night." It is clear from the context that this refers to the Law of Moses, which had only recently been written down. In Joshua's day that was the full extent of the Scriptures which were available to God's people.

By the time Psalm 1 was written, however, the Scriptures had grown considerably. We don't know exactly when this psalm was written, but in all likelihood its author also knew most of the historical books of the Old Testament, as well as most of the prophets. All of this was now part of God's instruction or *tora*, and all of it was meant to be meditated on by the righteous man.

Silent reading unknown

What exactly did the psalmist in Psalm 1 mean by "meditating" on the Scriptures? Literally, the Hebrew verb that is here used means "mutter" or "read in an undertone." People today are taught in school to read silently, not to quietly pronounce the words as they read. But in the ancient world silent reading was almost unknown.

If you could read, you would either read out loud for others to hear, or you would softly pronounce the words under your breath if you were reading in private. It is such private reading that is part of the daily routine of the righteous man in Psalm 1.

Like the tree to which he is compared in verse 3, he sinks his roots into the well-watered soil in which he is planted, drawing sustenance from the written Word of God by repeating its words softly to himself. By such meditating he is enabled to yield fruit in his season.

Since the ancient psalmist's day the written instruction of God has expanded again. It now includes the entire Old Testament and the 27 books of the New. The teaching of Psalm 1 now has an expanding meaning, since the righteous person today has the entire Scriptures to draw on for his or her life. But the same principle holds: the life of the righteous is characterized by daily, attentive reading of Scripture.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

First steps taken toward Europe-wide Protestant church

VIENNA, Switzerland (EP) — Leaders from more than 80 Lutheran, Reformed and United churches in Europe took the first steps toward a Europe-wide Protestant church at a meeting in Vienna in early May. One church leader estimated that this could mean a "European synod" within 10 years.

The church leaders agreed to strengthen the Leuenberg Church Fellowship, to "ensure that the voice of the churches of the Reformation is heard more clearly than before on contemporary questions relevant to a Europe that is growing closer together."

The Leuenberg Church Fellowship, named after a 1973 agreement between European Lutheran, Reformed and United churches that overcame doctrinal differences dating from the Reformation, allows full church fellowship between the signatory churches.

Settling differences

This agreement has focused on settling major doctrinal differences through theological discussion. But with the gathering in Vienna, participants were challenged to respond to today's world in the name of an ethic which values human beings, peace, justice and solidarity. Many delegates called on the Leuenberg Church Fellowship, which groups Protestant churches together, to adopt a more political stance to allow the voice of the Reformation to be heard in debates about the future of Europe.

The Ecumenical Press Service asked Peter Beier, president of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland (Germany), whether the decisions in Vienna meant the first step towards a European-wide Protestant church. Beier said that he did not want a European "superchurch" but rather a federal church structure. "In 10 years this might mean a European synod, but we will have to see how things develop."

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Ron's journey to unconditional love

Bep Koole

The following story is about God's faithfulness in the life of Ron de Koning. It's a story too precious to be kept to myself.

Ron de Koning.

I knew "Ronnie" as a child in the Netherlands, a fun kid with big ears and a constant sparkle in his brown eyes. He was my sister-in-law's youngest brother. When I left for Canada, Ronnie was in his early teens. We lost contact. He eventually moved to New York. About three years ago he moved back to the Netherlands.

Last summer my brother and sister-in-law came to Canada for a visit. When I casually asked whether Ron was enjoying living in Holland again, we heard the reason for his return: Ronnie was gay and had AIDS.

We cried together, sharing our sadness.

"We hope you support and love him," we said to my relatives.

"Yes," they assured us, "we love him very much and stand by him whenever he needs us."

Ron was doing well in the Netherlands. The love he received, the excellent medical care, and most of all, his positive attitude and zest for life played a role in his well-being.

A burning question

My brother told us about the amazing peace Ron had, a peace that seemed to come from some mysterious source. Was it God?

"Does Ron know the Lord?" This question kept haunting me and I *had* to find out. I sent him the book *Jesus Now* by Leslie Brandt, and a letter expressing the thought that if he knew Jesus this book might help to get to know him better; and if he didn't, he might get to know Jesus now. I also invited Ron to stop over at our home on his next business trip to New York.

"Ron drank in everything he saw and heard."

One Friday last September, Ron phoned and told me that he wanted to visit us and how excited he was about it."

"You really took a chance when you sent me that book," he said, "but I'm so glad you did. I would really like to go to church with you." (He also told me that his ears were on wings!)

The Spirit's leading

The following Sunday, Ron was in our church for the afternoon service. Before the service I had asked our church's prayer team to pray for Ron, and also for my husband, Marinus, and myself.

Ron drank in everything he saw and heard. When we all held hands during prayer, he just squeezed my hand. He found the service overwhelming and had felt the leading of God's spirit.

The remainder of the weekend he talked with us about his spiritual journey and his search for meaning. He asked hundreds of questions.

What about Jesus?

Ron had always been a gentle and caring person. He enjoyed nature and could see God's hand in it. But what about Jesus? Where did *he* fit in?

What a joy it was to tell him about the saving grace of our Lord, and his unconditional love! I have never seen anyone so hungry to hear the good news. Ron also asked me questions that I could not answer: but the most important thing he needed to hear was that Jesus never, ever, sends away anyone who turns to him.

We promised to keep praying for him and, at his request, we also prayed that this father might reconcile with him. His father's silence was the saddest part of Ron's life. It was a very intense visit.

Hello to life

We kept in touch and Ron became even more dear to us. On March 15 of this year he was hospitalized. Ron de Koning passed away on April 19 at age 44.

A week before his death we received a farewell letter by fax. The letter, translated from the Dutch, expresses best Ron's state of mind at the time of his death.

Dearest Bep and Marinus,

My battle is over! I am so tired and worn that I don't have the energy and desire to go on. You don't know how often I call on God to take me back into his heavenly kingdom. I know that he hears my prayers. Especially now I feel so strongly that I am his child and that I, too, may share in the hope, salvation and resurrection which awaits us all. Lord, have mercy and take your child into your hands.

I talk a lot with God. It gives me so much strength and joy. The desire to return to him is quite strong. It all went so fast. Only 10 days actually — from a person with energy, embracing life, to a small heap of nothing. The time has come to let go of life so that the other Life may be fulfilled and revealed.

Bye, dear Bep and Marinus.

Ronnie.

A day later we talked to him on the phone. His voice was strong and clear, despite his total weakness. We cried together, but they were tears of joy. He told about his deep peace and how important it had been for him to hear, back in September, that God loved him unconditionally.

Bep Koole is a member of Jubilee Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in St. Catharines, Ont.

The prodigal sun

After a long eclipse due to the low price of oil since the early 1980s, is solar energy making a comeback?

Michel Rodot

Who now remembers the traumatic oil price hikes of 1973 and '79?

During those oil crunches experts started insisting that oil reserves were limited, that those under oil's spell would sooner or later pay a financial and political price for such dependence.

This sparked keen interest in alternative forms of energy: nuclear, of course; but also solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and hydro-electric power from micro-dams. These sources combine three big advantages: they use cheap, and often free, raw materials that nature renews; they are available in remote areas where they can be scaled to suit needs, even of individual families; and they do not degrade the environment.

Scientists worked hard to develop and popularize solar energy conversion systems. Thus in 1981 the UN Conference on New and Renewable Energies predicted that by the year 2000 these energies would account for 32 to 56 per cent of world commercial consumption.

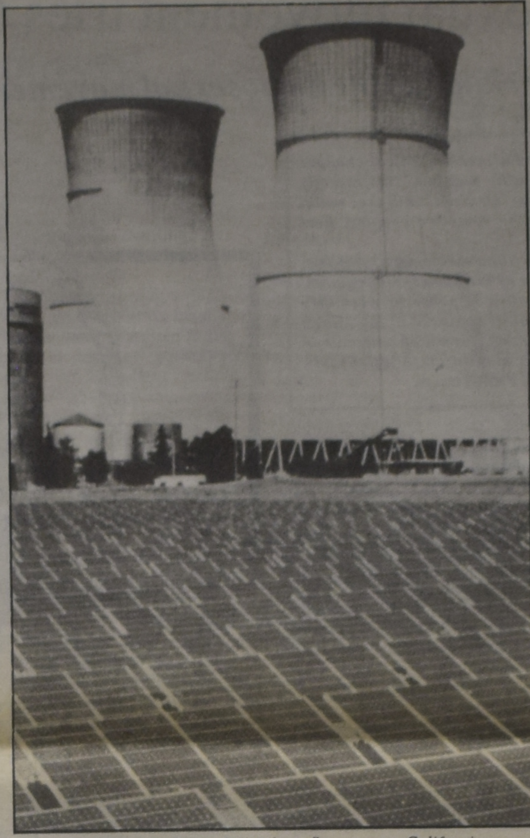
Back to slurping it up

But what happened? We're six years away from 2000 and these energies represent no more than 19 per cent of the world total energy use, as compared with 76 per cent for coal, oil and gas, and five per cent for nuclear.

Oil is now selling for less than $14 a barrel and extraction and consumption have taken off again. Just over three-quarters of the world's oil-bearing regions are concentrated in the 13 OPEC countries, most of which are in the Middle East. Moreover, most oil consumers, including some of the biggest (Japan, Germany), are not oil producers, while some high producers consume very little.

Meanwhile, most population growth is occurring in the Third World. That scenario is why the World Energy Council forecasts that energy demand will increase by 50 per cent between 2000 and 2020. If this energy demand continues to focus on fossil fuels an energy bottleneck may strangle development in the non-oil producing countries of the Southern Hemisphere and eventually threaten their very survival.

To avoid this fate they will have to devote 10 to 15 per cent of their investment budgets to the energy sector. If that is beyond their means, we can expect about 35 per cent of the world's population will be living in acute energy poverty by 2020, and nearly two billion people in rural areas will still be living on the fringes of society, without electricity and relying on non-marketed energy for 30-45 per cent of their needs.


The world's largest photovoltaic plant, Sacramento California

LIEBARD/ADEME

Smog getting worse

The facts are now clear: emissions of carbon gases and sulphur, and nitrogen oxides from burning petroleum products, natural gas and coal are still on the increase. The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has grown by 30 per cent since the start of the Industrial Revolution in the last century, and is rising by 0.5 per cent annually. The rate for CFCs is four per cent a year.

There is increasing evidence that these emissions are intensifying the greenhouse effect, damaging the ozone layer and causing acid rain. We know today that the burning of oil, gas and coal contributes about half of the greenhouse gases.

> *"If devoting 10 to 15 per cent of their budgets to energy is beyond the means of Southern Hemisphere countries we can expect about 35 per cent of the world's population will be living in acute energy poverty by 2020."*

In addition, since the vast majority of rural people in the Third World can't afford fossil fuels they are meeting their energy needs by burning massive amounts of wood. That, in turn, leads to deforestation and desertification, with disastrous effects on the climate.

Facing our responsibility

Industrialized countries must face up to their responsibilities in this, but it also sets up a challenge for the developing world. Although growth is a legitimate aspiration, environmental protection requires that the vicious energy/pollution circle be broken.

This means that machines using polluting forms of energy, whether for industrial or personal use, will have to be replaced by highly energy-efficient equipment which has a minimal negative impact on the environment.

Industrialized countries are the richest and the most polluting. They will therefore be expected to foot most of the bill, both in their own backyards, and in developing countries through technology transfers and financial aid.

Rightly or wrongly, Third World countries feel that as they are already struggling with population explosion and recession they should not have to sacrifice their economic growth on the altar of environmental protection.

Key to the future

Be that as it may, the only way to meet this challenge, in both the North and South, is to expand the use of renewable forms of energy as quickly as possible. In the North they could gradually complement conventional energy, especially for domestic water heating. The cost of renewable energy sources would fall if their use became widespread, through economies of scale and the advances made by the research programs they would stimulate.

Lower costs would make using renewable energy even more attractive in the South. For nearly half the population of the planet (the 600 million families isolated in rural areas of the Third World), connection to the national grid would be prohibitively expensive, even in the long term, and not economically viable because consumption would be too low.

But is this a reason for abandoning them to their fate in defiance of all the norms of fairness?

Renewable energy sources are the only possible way of providing them with a minimum of comforts (lighting, pumped water and health care), with the means to keep medicines in good condition, to maintain contact with the outside world (radio, telephone, TV), and a power supply for irrigating a vegetable plot or starting a small-scale business.

"Solar" power is therefore an essential answer to slowing the exodus to the big cities and combating the impoverishment of societies that represent nearly half of humanity.

> *"The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has grown by 30 per cent since the start of the Industrial Revolution in the last century."*

Renewable energy sources are not only crucial for bridging the widening energy gap and essential for protecting the environment right now: they are one of the keys to tomorrow's development, especially if we want it to be long-lasting.

Michel Rodot is a French environmental scientist who periodically writes for UNESCO Sources. This article first appeared in the January 1994 issue of that paper.

The homosexual movement tries to tilt the family(3)

We must challenge claims of the homosexual movement

The gay and lesbian movement is seeking radical changes in social behavior, religion, morality and law. Just recently the Government of Ontario tried to introduce a bill that would grant all the rights of a family to same-sex couples. Fortunately the bill failed.

A US group of Jewish and Christian theologians, ethicists, philosophers and scholars, known as the Ramsey Colloquium, have written a careful and sensitive response to what they consider a dangerous development. It appeared in the March 1994 issue of First Things, *a monthly journal of religion and public life. We reprint most of it here in three instalments, with permission from the editor of* First Things.

We turn our attention now to a few of the important public claims made by gay and lesbian advocates (even as we recognize that the movement is not monolithic).

As we noticed earlier, there is an important distinction between those who wish to "mainstream" homosexual life and those who aim at restructuring culture. This is roughly the direction between those who seek integration and those who seek revolution. Although these different streams of the movement need to be distinguished, a few claims are so frequently encountered that they require attention.

Many gays argue that they have no choice, that they could not be otherwise than they are. Such an assertion can take a variety of forms — for example, that "being gay is natural for me" or even that "God made me this way."

We cannot settle the dispute about the roots — genetic or environmental — of homosexual orientation. When some scientific evidence suggests a genetic predisposition for homosexual orientation, the case is not significantly different from evidence of predispositions toward other traits — for example, alcoholism or violence.

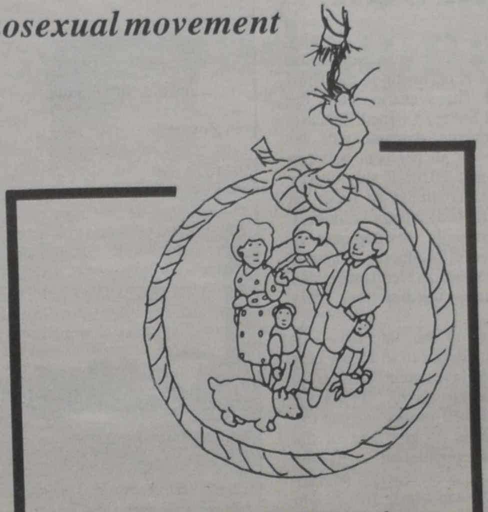
"We cannot literally change the hand we have been dealt ....but we are responsible for how we play that hand

In each instance we must still ask whether such a predisposition should be acted upon or whether it should be resisted. Whether or not a homosexual orientation can be changed — and it is important to recognize that there are responsible authorities on both sides of this question — we affirm the obligation of pastors and therapists to assist those who recognize the value of chaste living to resist the impulse to act on their desire for homogenital gratification.

The Kinsey data, which suggested that 10 per cent of males are homosexual, have now been convincingly discredited. Current research suggests that the percentage of males whose sexual desires and behavior are exclusively homosexual is as low as 1 per cent or 2 per cent in developed societies.

In any case, the statistical frequency of an act or desire does not determine its moral status. Racial discrimination and child abuse occur frequently in society, but that does not make them "natural" in the moral sense. What is in accord with human nature is behavior appropriate to what we are meant to be — appropriate to what God created and calls us to be.

In a fallen creation, many quite common attitudes and behaviors must be straightforwardly designated as sin. Although we are equal before God, we are not born equal in terms of our strengths and weaknesses, our tendencies and dispositions, our nature and nurture. We cannot utterly change the hand we have been dealt by inheritance and family circumstances, but we are responsible for how we play that hand.



Families are fragile institutions

Inclination and temptation are not sinful, although they surely result from humanity's fallen condition. Sin occurs in the joining of the will, freely and knowingly, to an act or way of life that is contrary to God's purpose.

Religious communities in particular must lovingly support all the faithful in their struggle against temptation, while at the same time insisting that precisely for their sake we must describe as sinful the homogenital and extramarital heterosexual behavior to which some are drawn.

Claim for self-rule

Many in our society — both straight and gay — also contend that what people do sexually is entirely a private matter and no one's business but their own. The form this claim takes is often puzzling to many people — and rightly so. For what were once considered private acts are not highly publicized, while, for the same acts, public privilege is claimed because they are private. What is confusedly at work here is an extreme individualism, a claim for autonomy so extreme that it must undercut the common good.

To be sure, there should in our society be a wide zone for private behavior, including that most Americans would deem wrong. Some of us oppose anti-sodomy statutes. In a society premised upon limited government there are realms of behavior that ought to be beyond the supervision of the state.

In addition to the way sexual wrongdoing harms character, however, there are often other harms involved. We have in mind the alarming rates of sexual promiscuity, depression, and suicide and the ominous presence of AIDS within the homosexual subculture. No one can doubt that these are reasons for public concern.

Another legitimate reason for public concern is the harm done to the social order when policies are advanced that would increase the incidence of the gay lifestyle and undermine the normative character of marriage and family life.

Concern for young

Since there are good reasons to support the heterosexual norm, since it has been developed with great difficulty, and since it can be maintained only if it is cared for and supported, we cannot be indifferent to attacks upon it. The social norms by which sexual behavior is inculcated and controlled are of urgent importance for families and for the society as a whole.

Advocates of the gay and lesbian movement have the responsibility to set forth publicly their alternative proposals. This must mean more than calling for liberation from established standards. They must clarify for all of us how sexual mores are to be inculcated in the young, who are particularly vulnerable to seduction and solicitation.

Public anxiety about homosexuality is preeminently a concern about the vulnerabilities of the young. This, we are persuaded, is a legitimate and urgent public concern.

Unconvincing

Gay and lesbian advocates sometimes claim that they are asking for no more than an end to discrimination, drawing an analogy with the earlier civil rights movement that sought justice for black Americans. The analogy is unconvincing and misleading. Differences of race are in accord with — not contrary to — our nature, and such differences do not provide justification for behavior otherwise unacceptable.

It is sometimes claimed that homosexuals want only a recognition of their status, not necessarily of their behavior. But in this case the distinction between status and behavior does not hold. The public declaration of status ("coming out of the closet") is a declaration of intended behavior.

We must distinguish

Certain discriminations are necessary within society; it is not too much to say that civilization itself depends on the making of such distinctions (between, finally, right and wrong). In our public life, some discrimination is in order — when, for example, in education and programs involving young people the intent is to prevent predatory behavior that can take place under the guise of supporting young people in their anxieties about their "sexual identity."

It is necessary to discriminate between relationships. Gay and lesbian "domestic partnerships," for example, should not be socially recognized as the moral equivalent of marriage. We note again that marriage and the family are institutions necessary for our continued social well-being and, in an individualistic society that tends to liberation from all constraint, they are fragile institutions in need of careful and continuing support.

Don't tell the Creator fringe-toed lizards are useless critters

Environmental

Housekeeping

John Wood

We returned to our church for a barbecue after an hour's walk along the river. The ersatz fire in a gas grill, despite its convenience, left me longing for a real fire and set me thinking, too. Fiery metaphors seem to shoot up around environmental issues.

The extinction of a species has been likened to burning an artistic masterpiece from the Louvre. Each one is a unique creation that can never be retrieved once it is gone. Can you imagine someone getting up in the morning and saying, "I think I'll go burn-up some irreplaceable part of the creation today?" Yet our collective actions in too many cases lead to this end. If we accepted the metaphor that each species is a masterpiece of the Creator we might resist their loss more vigorously.

Tapioca, anyone?

Tapioca pudding is one of my all-time favorite desserts! This delicious treat comes from a poisonous jungle tuber. The Amazon Indians first discovered how to remove the cyanic compounds from the root and made it a staple of their diet.

This is one of hundreds of useful plants known to members of the 50 or so tribes in this part of the world. The rain forest is a combination grocery store, pharmacopoeia, artist's supply house and exotic pet store, with a variety that even Walmart would envy. It has been estimated that 80,000 species of plants live there. But the chemical constituents in only one in 10 has been investigated even superficially.

A jungle library goes up in smoke

Think of it! A storehouse of hidden chemical treasures. A library of unopened books with an encyclopedia of botanical knowledge in the collective memory of these tribes. Yet the figurative and literal fires of civilization are burning this library faster than the books can be opened.

Ethnobotany is not a high-profile line of scientific inquiry. We seem more interested in the hardwood furniture, panelling, paper and chopsticks culled from the forest than in learning how the forest works. The recent discovery of the anti-cancer compound taxol in Pacific Coast yew trees reminds us that the great temperate and boreal forests also hold unrecognized riches.

It is the work of a fool to burn down something that he or she could never build. We would never countenance someone burning the great libraries of our day. Why does burning the library of Amazonia fail to arouse us?

"Science fiddles while the earth burns" a headline recently trumpeted. The role that the scientific community plays in all of this has been under increasing scrunity. The ascendancy of a reductionist approach in biology has eclipsed approaches based on natural history and the ecosystem. The past funding of big science projects has left us with few specialists and little knowledge of what E.O. Wilson called, "the little things that run the world." We are only slowly awakening to the fact that without a vigorous effort to conserve portions of the earth, little may be left.

Fire is an ancient symbol and human beings have long recognized its transforming ability. The Greeks called it elemental. The Scriptures feature it in judgment and for refining. I wonder what will happen when our ideas about stewardship are tested in the light/fire of the creator's judgment? I don't think that I want to try and tell him that grizzly bears or spotted owls, mountain gorillas or Bengal tigers, or even fringe-toed lizards or furbish louseworts were unimportant. The false choice of caring for people or caring for creatures must be rejected, lest the fire overtake us.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College in Edmonton.

'The sun shines even at night'

ISSAKA SAIDOU

Night travellers on the road to Ouallam, a town lying some 100 km north of Niamey, the capital of Niger, are always amazed to see lights shining in the middle of the bush.

What's the mystery? Niger's Solar Energy Office has the answer: solar panels which since 1991 have been providing electricity for the village of Kone Beri and its 2,500 inhabitants. Not surprisingly, the way of life in Kone Beri has changed: there's refrigeration, pumped and heated water — and, inescapably, TVs and VCRs.

U.S. cleans up bottled water guidelines

Marian Van Til

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A lot more people are drinking bottled water than they were 10 years ago. But what they're drinking (and spending money on) may not always be much better than tap water, said the House Energy and Commerce Committee of the U.S. Congress in 1991 as part of an investigation.

In fact, 25 per cent of high priced bottled water brands came from the same sources as tap water, said the House committee. Another 25 per cent couldn't document their sources, and 31 per cent exceeded allowable levels of contamination.

But despite the House committee's work, the bottled water companies were not forced to clean up their acts — until now.

Last month the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published its toughest standards yet, reports the current issue of *Audubon Activist.*

The new rules include additional health standards for 38 compounds (including lead) found in drinking water. The standards are equal to or better than the Safe Drinking Water Act's allowable levels for tap water. Bottlers also have to identify the source of their water.

"Spring water" is still a source of contention, says *Audubon Activist.* Spring water may be drawn from surface natural springs or from drilled underground wells. The wells, critics say, are more likely to contain contaminates. Despite that, "spring water" is often the highest priced of the bottled waters.

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Experts discuss what the Bible says about women

Marian Van Til

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Four experts on biblical exegesis conducted a panel discussion before 184 Christian Reformed Church members on the Bible passages related to "women in office." Most CRC members have probably heard several such discussions in the last five years.

What is unprecedented about *this* discussion is that it took place as part of the early business of the CRC's Synod 1994, for the benefit of its 184 male delegates. Those delegates would have to decide a few days later whether to allow local congregations the prerogative to ordain women as elders and ministers.

The panel idea came from synod's 19-member "women in office" advisory committee and was agreed to by the full synod on June 15. Henry Zwaanstra, a Calvin Seminary professor and advisor to the committee, explained, "We want an informed synod — which is the next best thing to a *Reformed* synod." It was felt such a discussion would help provide a biblical basis for guiding delegates in their own discussion and decision on the issue scheduled for Tuesday, June 21.

The panel consisted of Drs. Albert Wolters and Norman Shepherd, who oppose ordaining women, and Drs. John Cooper and Clarence Boomsma, who favor it. Wolters teaches theology and classical languages at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Shepherd is pastor of Cottage Grove CRC in South Holland, Ill. Cooper teaches theology at Calvin Seminary. Boomsma is a retired pastor and past long-time member of the Inter-Church Relations Committee. All four have written extensively on the issue.

Elder delegate Gary Duthler (Classis Alberta North) was impressed. "We heard four wonderful biblical scholars eloquently portray two different presentations on how Scripture speaks of this issue," said Duthler in a telephone interview right after the discussion. "I found all of them impressive. It emphasizes that, clearly, we are not of one mind but that we are of one spirit." Duthler thinks that should mean "we can work together in the same church."

He says the "general consensus" among the only three fellow delegates he had yet had a chance to talk with was, "We have learned much." He adds, "I didn't ask them where they stand on the issue. I'm more interested in how we get to where we'll eventually stand." No other delegates were immediately available for comment.

The advisory committee has divided itself into a 14-member majority (opposing women in office) and five-member minority. This is not necessarily a reflection of the views of the synod as a whole, as delegates may signify which advisory committee they prefer to be on. The committee's position reports have not yet been released as of this writing.

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Peter & Marja are IN

Life is full of crossing finish lines

Dear Readers:

Still no letters. So, with CC's permission, here is an article on the Boston Marathon which Peter wrote for the Jubilee Times, *our church's bi-monthly newsletter. While you're thinking about this reflection on "Finish Lines", please also reflect on some questions for this column! Without your input we're finished for the time being.*

The last five miles into Boston were the toughest: the point in the marathon where your glycogen stores are almost depleted and the only thing you have left is sheer willpower. The Newton Hills, five torturous miles ending with the infamous "Heartbreak Hill," are behind you. Ahead you see the city, and the giant Citgo sign exactly one mile from the finish. The sign beckons but never seems to get any closer. Your legs have begun to feel like two by fours.

By thinking about Marja waiting six blocks from the finish line I resisted the temptation to join some of the runners who had slowed to a walk.

Another motivating thought: I didn't want to come home and tell friends and family that I hadn't finished. The verse I had written on my shoes repeated itself, mantra-like, in my mind: "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

Almost over

I especially thought about the finish line. When it finally came into view I gathered the energy to sprint the last 800 meters, Marja's encouraging yell ringing in my ears as I passed her: "You're looking great! I love you!"

Totally spent I entered one of three chutes which held lines of weary runners. A medic asked if I was all right. A little dazed, I said, "I don't know." Then..., "Actually, I don't think I'm doing very well."

Immediately a wheelchair whisked me to the medical tent. Ten minutes later, feeling much better thanks to some water and yogurt, I went in search of Marja.

Time is the key

The beauty of a race is that it *does* have a finish line. You know the agony will continue for only so long. In fact, experienced runners will not think of laps or miles to go, but of how much *time* is left: *Hang in there for 15 more minutes..., for five more minutes..., for one more minute....*

The fact that the race has a beginning, a middle and *an end* is what makes it exciting — and what makes it tolerable when the pain sets in, as it always does.

Hanging in there

Many things in life have "finish lines." A church education program runs from September to April or May. A term of church office has a limit. A growing season, even in a greenhouse, is a *season* — there are busy times — Easter, Mother's Day, Christmas — with respites in between. School quits for the summer. Even the summer winds down, the end of August arriving with a welcome sigh for those with summer jobs and for frazzled parents of young children.

However, not every situation or relationship in our lives has a clear finish line. Some things just seem to go on and on; routines are endlessly repeated; problems go unresolved. Especially then, we need to hang in there and keep going in the Lord's strength.

Boundaries can be liberating

When it feels as if work, parenting, problems, suffering or even life itself will go on forever, we need to think about finish lines.

By setting attainable goals, celebrating accomplishments and bringing closure to difficult situations we establish some boundaries that give us a sense of completion. The sense of making a beginning, hanging in there for the middle, and reaching the end is what we need to live our lives with courage and joy.

In retrospect, the best experiences of my life have been characterized by a vivid awareness of moving through these three stages. Without finish lines, we risk becoming gerbils, running mindlessly on a treadwheel, going nowhere, seemingly forever.

'It is finished'

As a Christian I can't help but think of one of Jesus' "seven last words" on the cross: "It is finished." Jesus, too, crossed a finish line; *the* finish line. And that crossing brought relief and a great victory in which all of us share. If he needed a finish line then, surely, so do we.

Write to: P & M
c/o Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Ludkea, Tom Zeyl, Irene Bom, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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Births

BOSVELD:
Ed and Joanne (nee Bouwers) thank the Lord for blessing us with a healthy baby boy

JOSHUA RYAN

born on Sunday, May 29, 1994, at Peel Memorial Hospital. Joshua weighed 3.6 kg (7 pounds, 12 oz) at birth.

First grandchild for Martin and Lynn Bosveld of Chatham, Ont., and seventh grandchild for Albert and Gertie Bouwers of Metcalfe, Ont. Another great-grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. F.E. Van Delden (de Ruiter) of the Netherlands and for Mrs. F. Bosveld of Chatham, Ont.

Joshua's new address is: 20 Mitchell Avenue, Brampton, ON L6Z 1H3. Phone: (905) 840-3189.

Birthdays

VAN ARRAGON:
We are pleased to announce that our parents

WILLEM and HARMINA
VAN ARRAGON
(LINDE)

are celebrating their 80th birthday. Mom on June 2, 1994, and Dad on August 15, 1994.

We, their children and grandchildren are grateful for their many years of service to the Lord and their community and for the ongoing love, support and encouragement given to us. We pray that God will continue to give them the health and energy in the time to come.

Congratulations and love from:
Jenny & Martin Oldengarm — Harriston, Ont.
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Gertie & Charles Bamford — San Jose, Calif.
  Scott & Rebecca, Harmina & Paul, Matthew, Rebecca
MaryAnn & Jerry Kingma — Strathroy, Ont.
  Raymond, Garett, Karen & Mark, Henry, Linda
Gary & Gretchen Van Arragon — Guelph, Ont.
  Willem & Becky, Angela & Gord, Raymond, Brad, Harmina, Melanie
Leo & Cathy Van Arragon — Belleville, Ont.
  Lisa, Ben, Christy
Harma & Raymond Badgley — Trenton, Ont.
Wilma & Ralph Linder — St. Charles, Il.
Wayne & Brenda Collinson — Strathroy, Ont.
  Stephen
Mike Parker — Victoria, B.C.
Dan Fletcher — Oakville, Ont.

Home address: 400 Dominion Street, Apt. 60, Strathroy, ON N7G 3G8

Anniversaries

Congratulations to John Bastiaan and Catharina de Peuter (nee De Graaf) on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary!

Anniversaries

1969 June 28 1994
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart."

With thanks to God for his care, we would like to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents

CONRAD and ANNA VAN DYK
(nee KAMPHUIS)

Congratulations!
With love from:
Tracy
Tim
Supriya
Sashi
Shanti
Melissa
Jesse

Birthdays

HENNEVELD:
On July 11, 1994,

MRS. DIRKJE CLAZINA
HENNEVELD
(nee KOK)

hopes to celebrate her 90th birthday!

Her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren (20) give grateful praise and thanks to our covenant God for His great faithfulness.

Home address: #202-331 Knox St., New Westminster, BC V3L 3N4

Anniversaries

It is with praise and thankfulness to the Lord that we announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents

JOHN and MARGE POSTUMA

on June 28, 1994.

With love from your children:
Ted
Christine
Michelle
Laura
Sarah

"I will praise you, O Lord,
among the nations;
I will sing of you among the peoples.
For great is your love,
reaching to the heavens;
Your faithfulness reaches
to the skies.
Be exalted, O God,
above the heavens;
Let your glory be over all the earth"
(Ps. 57:9-11).

Address: 288 Morrison Drive, Caledonia, ON N3W 1A2

Personal

Nice Christian lady, 40+ of age, mother of one, business associate, with oriental background, likes nature, music, is looking for a warm Christian, hopefully someone to share life with. Please reply to **File #2619, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Anniversaries

Almkerk Bradford
1934 July 6 1994

With joy and thankfulness to our Lord, we are happy to announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

JOHN BASTIAAN and CATHARINA
DE PEUTER
(nee DE GRAAF)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you and keep you in His loving care for years to come.

Love from us all:
William & Rita de Peuter — Bradford
Audrey & Ken Killer — Thornhill
Rika & Stewart Andringa — Georgetown
Harry & Grace de Peuter — Brampton
Mary de Peuter — Bradford
Corrie & George Verkaik — Eustis, Fla.
Lawrence & Marie de Peuter — Bradford
John & Corry de Peuter — Bradford
Bastian & Ena de Peuter — Thunder Bay
Henry & Colleen de Peuter — Sundridge
Gary & Dorothy de Peuter — Sundridge
David & Shirley de Peuter — Brampton
Cathy de Peuter — Smithville
and 35 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren (and still growing!).

Best wishes are welcome at an open house on July 3, 1994, from 12-2 p.m. at Springdale Chr. Ref. Church Fellowship Hall, R.R. 4, Bradford, Ont.

Home address: 200 Holland Ct., Apt. 407, Bradford, ON L3Z 1R8

Goderich Georgetown
1954 July 16 1994

With thankfulness to God we happily announce the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents

HENK and MARYKE (MARY)
VANDERBURGH
(nee KNETSCH)

Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren:
Tom & Marilyn Konyndyk — Georgetown
  Robyn, Adele, Juliane, Laura
Jerry & Diana Vanderburgh — Brampton
  Tiffany, Michele, Jolene, Lindsay, Jason
Harry & Milly Roffel — Georgetown
  Leanne, Fred, Daniel, Emily, Dana
John & Marlene Vanderburgh — Georgetown
  Kayla, Rebecca, Michael
Rod & Patty Van Rys — Georgetown
  Benjamin

Look for
Peter and Marja
on page 14....

Classifieds

Anniversaries

Jarvis, Ont.

1954 June 24 1994

"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken" (Eccl. 4:12).

JOHN and GERRY VELDHUIS
(nee HOEKJEN)

We, your family, praise God for the 40 years He has given you together. 40 years of blessings and struggles have passed and we pray for God's continued guidance and care and may He grant you more years of happiness and love together.

With love from your family:
Trudy & Davis Miedema — Waterford, Ont.
  Ryan, Joel, Kristen, Aaron, Eden
Harry, deceased in 1985
Brian & Jenny Veldhuis — Waterford, Ont.
  Justine, Tyler, Amber
Chuck & Julie Veldhuis — Fenwick, Ont.
Ron & Grace Veldhuis — Waterford, Ont.
  Kyle, Michael
Paul & Irene Veldhuis — Mount Hope, Ont.
Ann & Carl Buys — Beamsville, Ont.
  Carl Jr., Christa, Sarah
Rita & Murry DeKoning — Port Dover, Ont.
  Jeremy, Carol, Colleen

Home address: 96 Main St., Box 545, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0 Phone (519) 587-4479

Congratulations to John and Gerry Veldhuis (nee Hoekjen) on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary!

Accommodation

Wanted to rent: the Netherlands. Due to job transfer, couple with three children require accommodation within commuting distance of **Amsterdam**, beginning Sept. 1, 1994, for 18 months. Prefer furnished, will consider unfurnished. If you know of possibilities, please call Fred or Joleen Vanderheide collect **(519) 743-4515**.

Real Estate

DAIRY FARM with sales arena. Ties for 90 head plus loose area, pipeline milking, 18 x 70 silo, 100 acres, no quota. Large home, 20 miles from Hamilton. Selling for the unbelievable price of only $279,900.

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Teachers

HOUSTON, B.C.: Houston Chr. School, located in the scenic Bulkley Valley, is in need of a **part-time Kindergarten teacher** for the 1994-95 school year. Interested teachers are encouraged to contact the school by writing to:

Houston Chr. School
Mr. Doyle Smiens, Principal
Box 237
Houston, BC V0J 1Z0

Thank you for your interest.

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls extended:

— to Immanuel, Simcoe, Ont., Rev. Ken Gehrels of Collingwood, Ont.

— To West End, Edmonton, Rev. Henry Jonker of First, Victoria, B.C.

Address change:

Rev. Daniel R. and Mrs. Ida Tigchelaar, 270 Talbot St., Essex, ON N8M 1B8. Effective July 1, 1994.

The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
Contact:
R. Vander Ploeg Secr./Treas.
210 Clarke St. N.
Woodstock, ON N4S 7M7
Phone: (519) 539-2117

Celebrating 35 years of Diaconal Ministry

◆

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Friday, October 14
- special celebration service
- speaker: Peter Zwart

At Brampton Second CRC

◆

Saturday, October 15
- our 35th annual meeting
- 16 workshops
- 16 seminars

At John Knox Chr. School , Brampton, ON

Diaconal Ministries
Formerly the All Ontario Diaconal Conference

To all *Christian Courier* subscribers and advertisters:

Only five issues will be published during July and August: July 1, 15 and August 12, 19 and 26

The ***Christian Courier*** office will be closed for vacation from **July 18** thru **August 1**. Our office will re-open Tuesday **August 2.**

ADVERTISING DEADLINES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Issue dated:	**Advertising deadline (4 p.m.):**
July 1	June 22
July 15	July 6
August 12	August 3
August 19	August 10
August 26	August 17

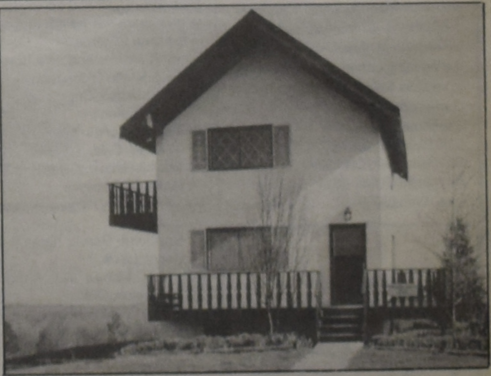
Your co-operation is appreciated. We wish you all a relaxing holiday.

Stan de Jong
Manager

Christian Courier will **not** publish July 8, 22, 29 and August 5.

For Rent

Chalet in Georgian Bay Area



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Youth Director Needed

The **Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church in Leduc, Alta.,** needs a youth director for a half-time position. Ebenezer is a church with 350 members under the age of 30, and with a variety of youth programs in place. We are looking for a dynamic, committed youth director with experience and training to supply support and leadership. If interested, please write to: **Al Notenbomer, R.R. #2, Leduc, AB T9E 2X2**

Seeking a Pastor

The **Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church of Calgary, Alta.**, a committed congregation of 39 families, is looking for a pastor. Eighteen months ago, approximately half of our congregation left the CRC denomination and we are now in need of a leader who will help us to rebuild our church Inquiries and/or resumes may be torwarded to the **Search Committee, Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, 2111-52 Street, N.W., Calgary, AB T3B 1C3 Canada, or contact Mrs. Alice Milne, Secretary, Search Committee, (403) 288-4530.**

Co-ordinator of Education and Congregational Life

The **First Christian Reformed Church of Guelph, Ont.**, is currently seeking applicants for the newly-created position of **Co-ordinator of Education and Congregational Life**. This is a part-time (20 hours/week) one-year contract position which is subject to annual review. Applicants are requested to apply in writing to **John Vanderheide, Clerk, First CRC, 287 Water St., Guelph, ON N1G 1B6.** A resume outlining the applicant's qualifications and experience in the areas of church leadership and teaching should be included. All applications received prior to June 30 will be considered. A detailed description can be obtained by calling.**Bonney Vanden Broek** at our church office: **(519) 822-7720.**

GENERAL OFFICE HELP

General Office Help required by Connon Nurseries in **Waterdown, Ont.** Duties include Accounts Payable, and Accounts Receivable. Computer knowledge is a must.
If interested please send resume to:
P.O. Box 1218
Waterdown, ON L0R 2H0

Seeking a Pastor

Glad Tidings Christian Reformed Church, located in **Edmonton, Alta.,** is seeking a pastor. We are a small group, with a rich history, who desire to continue to be challenged to live as active disciples, reaching out to others and walking and living a spirit-filled life. Please contact **Bill Diepeveen, Calling Committee Chair at (403) 483-5693 (evenings), 14620-90 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5R 4V3** if you wish to know more about us.

Attention

Anniversary Announcements

Because of declining revenues, *Christian Courier* will no longer publish free photos with anniversary announcements celebrating 50 years or more. **Effective June 1, 1994**, please add the normal fee of $25 when sending a photo. This applies to all announcements.

Stan de Jong, manager

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Valentine Travel Markham
416.324.3330/1.800.268.6144
Verstraete Travel Aurora
416.969.8100/1.800.565.9267

CARS - MOTORHOMES - MINIVANS

Calendar

June 25 Join 15 million marchers around the globe for the annual "March for Jesus." The southern Ontario regional march, which includes Toronto and Niagara Falls, will be held at 2 p.m., in **Hamilton**, Ont. (corner York & Bay).

June 26 Retirement service for Rev. Henry R. De Bolster, 10 a.m., CRC **Ancaster,** Ont. All welcome!

July 1 "Frisian Picnic," 11 a.m., Pinehurst Conservation Park, Hwy 24A, 4 miles north of **Paris**, Ont.

July 1 "Kaatsen," 11 a.m., Pinehurst Park, **Paris**, Ont.

July 9 "Kaatsen," 11:30 a.m., Fairgrounds, **Ingersoll**, Ont.

July 9 Second annual concert by the Redeemer College Alumni Concert Choir (conducted by Christiaan Teeuwsen), 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Choral works by Handel, Rutter, Grotenhuis, Palestrina as well as spirituals. Solos by Melanie Westerveld, Fred De Haan and Janna Wesselius. Free will offering.

July 10 Redeemer College Alumni Concert Choir participates in worship service, 6 p.m., First CRC, **Hamilton**, Ont.

July 11-22 Summer School at Wycliffe College, **Toronto**, Ont., sponsored by Wycliffe and ICS. Speakers include: Grant LeMarguand, Harry Fernhout, Edith Humphrey, James Olthuis, Mary VanderVennen and Loren Wilkinson. Registration and info.: (416) 979-2870, fax: (416) 979-0471.

July 13 "Hollandse Dag" at the Caradoc Community Centre, **Mount Brydges**, Ont. Starts at 10 a.m. (refreshments at 9:30 a.m.). Speaker: Rev. Jacob A. Quartel. Take your own lunch and cup along!

July 17 Dutch worship service led by Dr. Hilbert Vander Plaat, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

July 28-Aug. 1 ICS Ontario Family Conference, at HDCH, **Ancaster**, Ont. Theme: "Living in Grace: Forgiveness and Hope in Uncertain Times." Featured speaker: Dr. Lewis Smedes (Fuller Theological Seminary). Info.: (416) 979-2331.

Aug. 19-21 40th anniversary celebration weekend at the CRC, **Vernon**, B.C. Friends, former members and pastors are invited to attend. Info.: (604) 549-1746.

Aug. 27 "Kaatsen," 11:30 a.m., Southside Park, **Woodstock**, Ont.

Sept. 5 "Kaatsen," 11:30 a.m., Sherwood Park, **Stoney Creek**, Ont. Barbecue to follow.

Classifieds

For Sale	Vacation	Miscellaneous

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KITCHENER, ONTARIO

First Christian Reformed Church is moving. We have outgrown and sold our premises at 388 Ottawa St. S. The congregation is actively working towards completion of a new church building in Kitchener. In the interim, the facilities of **Woodland Christian High School** (R.R. #1, Breslau, Ont.) will be used for worship. This change is effective on **Sunday, June 12, 1994**.

New mailing address: c/o D. Flikweert, Clerk,
35 Cecile Dr., Kitchener, ON N2M 1V2

Survey for non-subscribers

Following a suggestion by a reader, we are printing a survey for non-subscribers and are asking our readers to pass on this copy of CC to a non-subscribing Christian person between the ages of 20 and 50, encourage him or her to read the issue, fill out the survey and return it to us.

Please rate the items below, using the following criteria: 1 = poor, 2 = average, 3 = good, 4 = very good; **AND/OR** write a brief comment on each.

	Comments	Rate
News coverage (pp.1,2,3)		( )
Editorial (p.4)		( )
Letters (p. 5)		( )
Alice Los (p.6)		( )
Senior related news (p.6)		( )
Arts/media (p.7)		( )
Church news (pp.8,9)		( )
Al Wolters (p.9)		( )
Ron's journey feature (p.10)		( )
Family disabilities (p. 11)		( )
Ramsey Colloquium (p.12)		( )
John Wood/Environment (p.13)		( )
Peter and Marja (p.14)		( )
Classifieds (pp.15, 16, 17, 18)		( )
World News/Tuyl (p. 19)		( )
News (p. 20)		( )
The content of CC as a whole		( )
The appearance of the paper		( )

Check why you do not subscribe: cost( ) time( ) not helpful ( ) disagree with editorial direction ( )

If you checked "not helpful" or "disagree", please explain __________

Does it matter to you whether CC continues? Yes ( ) No ( )

Of what denomination are you a member? __________

Any further comments? __________

Gender: Male ( ) Female ( ); Age: ( ); Occupation ( )

Please send or fax your response to:
Christian Courier
Attention: Survey Editor
261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4
St. Catharines, Ont.
L2W 1A1
Fax: (905) 682-8313

Each responding non-suscriber who checks off the next box will be given a free three-month subscription to C.C.:
Yes, reward me ( )

CHRISTIAN COURIER needs TELEMARKETERS

As part of our Spring '94 promotion campaign, **Christian Courier** conducted a pilot telemarketing project in St. Catharines, Ont. Four loyal CC supporters spent a few evenings on the phone and the result was **56 new subscribers!**

We need **local volunteers** all over Canada to conduct similar campaigns. It's too expensive to engage in telemarketing from St. Catharines. Key is: those who do the phoning must **know** the people in their community and must have a **warm heart** for CC! You can't beat the personal touch.

Don't let telemarketing scare you... it's a matter of simply phoning certain people between the hours of 5 and 7 p.m., for, say **two** or **three** evenings. We will supply you with a kit containing a) a computer printout of the subscribers in your area, and b) some simple instructions.

Christian Courier needs help! We simply need to expand our subscriber base. Please write, phone or fax **me or Bert Witvoet.** Thank you very much!

Stan de Jong
Business Manager

4-261 Martindale Road, St.Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313

In spite of the sun's rays, some discontent stays

World news bytes

Carl D. Tuyl

There are all kinds of economic signals which would indicate that good times are a-comin'. Mr. Aron Gampe, economist at the Bank of Nova Scotia, says that the Canadian economy is on a roll. Consumers have spent their income tax returns, unemployment is down, sales of big-ticket items are up, exporters are shipping, and the warmth of the sun soothes the pain in my bum knee to a tolerable level. So who's complaining?

★ ★ ★

Well, for starters, students in Newfoundland who will have to go back to school for two weeks because the teachers' strike there has finally been settled. Then there is the gay community in Ontario, where the provincial parliament defeated a bill that would have allowed same-sex couples the same benefits as matrimonial spouses. And maybe I should also list the staff of *Christian Courier*, because their subscriptions are down.

★ ★ ★

The S-word is making the rounds again. Prairie Preston wants to know what the federal government will do in case Quebec wants to secede from the Confederation. The Bloc-Leader Bouchard (I'll refrain from calling him by his exact titular designation, "Bloc-head") avowed that it is inconceivable that Canadians would block Quebec sovereignty by force or other means.

★ ★ ★

Prime Minister Chretien, the man beneath the halo (you all know, of course, that his name means "Christian") keeps saying that he does not want to talk about separation because it is as hypothetical and unlikely as the money that certain ads promise in case the buyer is not satisfied. Well, anyway, way back there on the election trail, Mr. Chretien (waving his red book like a toreador pestering a bull) promised to terminate that most-hated tax, the GST. True to his word, he appointed a parliamentary committee to process that prómise. That committee is now recommending not only that the tax be maintained, but that it apply to your morning porridge and your evening cup of tea.

★ ★ ★

Some people have occupations that are complete mysteries to others. There are professionals who make certain that our calendars and clocks run on time, and they have expressed the necessity of adding one second to the month of June. Would that show in my pay cheque, I wonder?

★ ★ ★

June is Senior Citizens month, and a whole bunch of the Gray Power tribe headed to Ottawa to tell Finance Minister Paul Martin to keep his greedy fingers off their pension cheques. Everyone wants the government to cut back, but not at his or her own expense. This year, Old Age Security will pay about $15.4 million to seniors. The employer/employee-funded Canada Pension Plan will provide an estimated $18.8 billion in 1994.

★ ★ ★

The CRTC granted permission for another 10 specialty channels on cable TV. Experts predict a 500-channel capacity on the tube in the future. That would produce Karpel Tunnel Disease in anyone trying to handle the remote, wouldn't it?

★ ★ ★

Let's see what the *New York Times* has to say. On June 7 it published a copy of the June 7, 1944, front page. Headlines: "Country in Prayer"; "Let Our Hearts be Stout" (a prayer by President Roosevelt of the United States); "10,000 Tons of Bombs Clear the Way." The *Times* also reports on the current and growing tension between North Korea and the United Nations. The United States is seeking to build a coalition in favor of punitive action against North Korea if it continues to defy UN nuclear proliferation rules. The North Korean government has declared that an embargo against its country would be seen as an act of war.

★ ★ ★

Oliver North, the guy who did an end-run around the whole U.S. Congress, and who is as corny as Iowa in August, has been nominated as a Republican candidate for the United States Senate. "Virginia is for 'tough' lovers," bumper stickers there used to read. Maybe they want to change that to "Virginia is for Goofballs." Many Republicans are dissociating themselves from North.

★ ★ ★

China's leaders are keeping an eye out for profit. The *China Daily* reports that the central government slashed import licenses and quotas on 195 foreign products in a move designed to enhance free trade and broaden the tax base.

★ ★ ★

South Africa's President Nelson Mandela was greeted with a standing ovation at the meeting of the Organization of African Unity. And Austria (some of us remember the Heimat of Seyss Inquart) has voted to join the European Community.

★ ★ ★

Mrs. Taslima Nashreen, a citizen of Bangladesh, is in hiding after Muslim clerics said she should be put to death. Mrs. Nashreen refuses to submit the patriarchy and says, among other things, that women in Islamic societies should have the same rights as men. "Death to her," the imams declared. Not surprisingly, Mrs. Nashreen is trying to leave Bangladesh.

★ ★ ★

I must tell you about Rabbi Moses Teitelbaum. Rabbi Moses believes that it is a sin to have a Jewish state before the Messiah comes. He went to Jerusalem in the company of about 2,000 followers in five jumbo jets (probably got group rates), distributed $5 million US and received the biggest welcome in Jerusalem since King David established his reign there.

★ ★ ★

A little while ago the *Montreal Gazette* carried a cartoon which showed two priests kneeling, the one saying to the other: "Something is wrong, I am not feeling guilty about anything." Sometimes I feel like that, especially when I am caught up with my work, have bought my wife flowers, have paid my bills, answered my telephone calls, watered the garden, mowed the lawn, done my filing, filled the car and finished my sermon for the next Sunday.

Carl Tuyl is a chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church and is a member of the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care.

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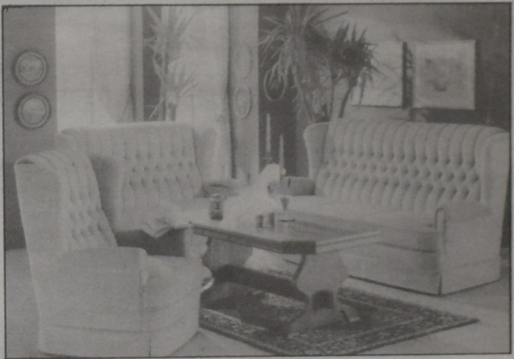

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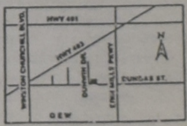

Mississauga
Dundas St. - 2 Blocks W. of Erin Mills Parkway (905) 828-9511

Faith turns townhouses into community

Four churches and a full-time chaplain help low-income tenants get back on their feet

Maria Stam

LONDON, Ont. — "Some people tend to look down on residents of townhouses, assuming their homes are heavily subsidized by the government," says Sandra McNee, the chaplain of the Limberlost community in London, Ont. "In reality," she says "25 per cent of the tenants' income goes toward the rent, so the higher their income the more rent they pay."

Surrounded by a neighborhood of single family homes in the northwest corner of London, the Limberlost townhouses provide living space for 160 families. Built more than 20 years ago by the province of Ontario, the complex is administered by the London and Middlesex Housing Authority. Sixty percent of the residents are women who are the sole supporters of their families. Among the 600 tenants there are 365 children. One third of the occupants are immigrants or refugees.

"There is a lot of grieving among these people. Their losses are so enormous," McNee explains. "In spite of it, their devotion to some higher power to be trusted is remarkable. Also there are some disabled persons with special needs among the tenants," she adds.

MARIA STAM

Chaplain Sandra McNee visits a Limberlost tenant.

Not your average government housing

The turnover is about 30 persons per year, with an average stay of five years. At present people tend to stay longer because of the recession.

Limberlost is family oriented and doesn't look any different from other similar townhouse complexes. Its uniqueness lies in the communal atmosphere fostered by a Christian presence. Tenants respond positively to the pastoral care of several churches. The outreach programs encouraged a closer co-operation and understanding among the residents, which sets Limberlost apart by comparison with other townhouse clusters.

The difference has been affirmed by the Housing Authority, Family and Children Services and the London police. The smooth functioning of this multicultural and multifaith community can be subscribed to the efforts of dedicated people who not only preach social justice but also practise it.

Christians share the load

The chaplaincy centre was established as a mission service by the Mennonite Church in 1981. As the tasks grew, other churches became involved, and since 1986 the workload and responsibilities are shared with the United, Anglican, the Catholic churches.

Aside from the spiritual, financial support is also provided by the four churches, making it possible to employ a full-time chaplain and to buy material for the many programs. The centre is presided over by a board comprised of church representatives, tenants elected by the tenant association, and friends of the centre from outside of the community. Decisions are made by consensus.

"We work without government involvement or finances. Sometimes we receive some money from the United Way," says McNee. "Our aim is to work *with* the people, not for them. We don't tell them what they have to do. Instead, we are trying to draw out their potential. It's so encouraging to discover the many gifts the tenants possess."

Time for kicks, too

The centre, located in two adjacent townhouses, conducts programs for all ages with the help of volunteers. A Thursday afternoon literacy program for children aged two to five awakens in youngsters the interest in books and reading. Stories are not only read, they are acted out by the children."

"The kids love the program," says a mother of two toddlers. A small library of donated books for that age group allows the children to take books home. On Saturday evenings a group of teenagers gathers under the leadership of a married couple.

Two craft programs encourage women to use their creative skills in the making of greeting cards, quilts, wall hangings and much more. Twice a year the items are sold and the money is used for more material, outings, and as a additional small income for the participants themselves.

Volunteers essential

At 10 o'clock every Friday morning there's a Bible study program for adults. Christmas and Easter celebrations are organized for all residents of the complex.

The community depends on driver volunteers, as two-thirds of the tenants don't have a car. This is especially important for doctor and hospital visits, but also for attending church services on Sundays.

Among the volunteers are a number of university students working with pre-teens. During the March break, in and outdoor activities kept the children off the streets and occupied. The groups recorded its undertakings and projects they were involved in on a white sheet on the wall to remind them of the great time they had.

Tenants not 'spoiled'

On the pastoral side, "visitations are important at all times, but especially when there is illness in a family or other things happen for which special support is needed," Sandra McNee says. During eight years of working with the community McNee feels she has gained the trust of the families and learned about their needs and expectations. But she emphasizes, "I'm not spoiling the tenants by doing something for them they can do themselves. I try to be present to them and give advice when they ask for it. But I'm also strict when necessary."

Thinkbit

Go to church now, before they take you there in a hearse.

From a bumper sticker

News Digest

Kissing footballers not part of the game

LONDON — Sometimes a kiss doesn't make everything better. Recently, an Australian Rules Football player was sent off the field and severely reprimanded for kissing an opponent on the lips, *The Daily Telegraph* reports. Russell Prowse of Cardross, thinking a fight was developing between the Cardross and Bambill teams, amazed opponent Scott Cameron by grabbing him by the cheeks and kissing him. A Cardross official later said: "We felt sorry for Cameron. Prowse is not an attractive man."

TV a first (and last?) for remote island

ST. HELENA — How does television affect kids? St. Helena, the remote island in the southeast Atlantic, is about to find out.

Feeling the pressures of modernization, St. Helena will have television beamed in by satellite for the first time, reports *The Independent*.

At present only 3.4 per cent of nine to 12-year-olds on the island have behavioral problems, compared with 14 per cent of that age group in London, says British psychologist Tony Charlton. "The complete absence of live TV is so rare," Charlton says. "St. Helena presents an unprecedented opportunity [for research]."

The 5,700 islanders — especially the children — will be studied to observe the medium's impact.

Enforced paternity leave in Sweden

STOCKHOLM — As of Jan. 1, paternity leave will be compulsory for Swedish fathers, reports *The Globe and Mail*. Unless Pop devotes the first month after birth to his new baby, he will lose the right to a generous salary compensation. The law was supported by all political parties except the right-wing New Democracy.